GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2346
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2004
CONTAINER SHORTAGE AT PORTS
Madhwaraj Smt. Manorama

Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether container availability at various ports has decreased due to inadequate number of containers in circulation and undue detention of containers by customs over disputes between shippers and consignees;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether thriving container markets in China and far-east have attracted a number of containers that were serving India earlier; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to ease the container shortage?

Answer

MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS(SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a)&(b): Non-availability of adequate number of containers has affected India`s exports to a certain extent during the months of September and October, 2004. However, the impact of non-availability of containers on exports is not quantifiable. The detention of containers by Customs in terms of provisions of Sections 118 and 119 of Customs Act may not affect the availability of containers to the exporting community.

(c)&(d): Thriving container market in China and Far-East does not have much impact on major container terminals in India. Department of Commerce has held several meetings with port authorities, Shipping Lines, freight forwarders and Customs House Agents. The agents have been advised to take effective steps to expedite clearance and inland haulage of import consignments so that availability of containers for export purposes may be enhanced.